

Who Is Jesus Part 3

The Good Shepherd

John 10:11-18

Memory Verses: John 10:11

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

In **Matthew 16:15** Jesus asks; who do you say that I am? It's a great question. Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus to the world? Who is Jesus in the context of history and philosophy? But most importantly, who is Jesus to you?

Over the last two weeks we've been exploring the Bible for answers to this question. Two weeks ago we discovered that he is the Chosen One who fulfills the prophecies of the Bible and saves the whole world from the curse of sin.

Last week as we dedicated the relaunch of our church and our new building to the Lord, we saw that Jesus is the head of the church, the leader of all who call themselves Christians, and as that leader we are to submit to his leading in our local church. Simply put... We don't run this thing... he does.

Today, we want to explore further to see who this Jesus is. Who does he say that he is? It's easy to discover this in the statements that begin with "I Am." Jesus says, "I Am" a couple of times throughout the Bible... and so lets start by looking at his "I Am" statement in **John 10:11** where he says, "I am the good shepherd."

Read with me if you would **John 10:11-18**... and let's explore what Jesus means when he says, "I Am the good shepherd."

The first thing that may strike you here is... If Jesus is the good shepherd... then am I a **sheep**? Some of us may take offense to the idea that we are sheep. In fact, calling someone a sheep has kind of been given a negative connotation in our culture recently. To call someone a sheep may mean that you are saying that they are mindless, brainwashed, or just willing to go along with just about anything. For instance, let's say one of your friends decides to camp out all night to be the first in line to buy the newest apple product, like an **iphone**. They love everything apple... but you think this is dumb because you believe that apple isn't the best product... it's just the most popular. Its a trendy fad. So you tell your friend... "go get a samsung man... they are cheaper and more user friendly... stop being a sheep and following the crowd." Right?

But when Jesus refers to us as sheep... this isn't at all what he's talking about. Instead he is referring to the relationship between a shepherd, a person who is hired to care for the sheep, and the sheep

themselves. You see... some may say.. sheep aren't all that valuable. If you have some sheep and one gets eaten by a wolf or one falls off a cliff... big deal. But Jesus says... I find my sheep very precious.

Get this... the idea here isn't how valuable are the sheep... the idea here is... how valuable are the sheep to the shepherd. The value of the sheep is only determined by how valuable the shepherd is and how the shepherd feels about them. The more valuable the shepherd... and the more value he gives to the sheep... determines how precious the sheep really are. And as we look at this passage we understand one thing. Jesus is really valuable... and he really loves his sheep... and that is what makes him so good. **A Regular Shepherd Sees The Sheep As Expendable... The Good Shepherd Sees Them As Essential**

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing we see here is that... **Jesus Is The Good Shepherd Because He Fights For You When Others Run Away (vs11-13)**. Look with me at **verses 11-13** again. It makes sense... If the shepherd is just some hired hand making minimum wage he will not risk his life for the sheep. He has no connection to them... they are just a job. But a good shepherd is different. He cares deeply for the sheep.

Jesus is not some hired hand. Instead, he cares for the sheep not as a duty but as a desire. He desires to care for us. And he doesn't care what it costs him. In fact, he'll pay anything and risk anything for his sheep. Jesus is willing to do whatever it takes to protect his sheep. In a lot of ways it doesn't make much sense... after all we are just sheep. But that's why he is so good.

Get this... others in your life will leave you high and dry – they will turn their backs on you... betray you. Many of you have experienced this. It is the worst feeling in the world. When the wolves come and the going gets tough.. and your burdens seem too burdensome... there will be those who cut bait and run – in that instance you become expendable to them. In that moment you feel worthless. But that's not how the good shepherd operates. **Hebrews 13:5** tells us that Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you. When others see you as expendable he sees you as essential. He will fight for you when no one else fights for you! When everyone else has left your side... Jesus, the good shepherd, never will! And get this.. **when the only one who has your back is Jesus... remember he's the only one you need. A Regular Shepherd Sees The Sheep As Expendable... The Good Shepherd Sees Them As Essential.** You are essential to Jesus, and therefore he fights for you!

The next thing we see here is ... **Jesus Is The Good Shepherd Because He Knows You Better Than You Know Yourself (vs14-15)**.

Have you ever thought... no one knows me. No one understands me. I mean... isn't it hard to find someone that knows you and understands you and still stays with you? I mean... my wife knows everything there is to know about me... and I've even heard her say "if I knew your sleeping habits, or teeth brushing habits, or buying habits... (apparently I have a lot of habits) before I married you..." right? It's very hard to find someone who really knows you and is willing to put up with you anyway. Now thank God my wife is still putting up with me... and thank God Jesus puts up with me too.

Listen, Jesus knows you better than you know yourself. Look at **vs 15** in the same way God knows Jesus... Jesus knows you. He knows every hair on your head, he knows your every thought, habit, problem, flaw, etc... and he still finds you essential... valuable. **Jesus knows all your flaws and loves you anyway.**

And we know him. If you know someone loves you the way Jesus does... then you make it a point to know them too. **John 10:27** tells us that if you are really one of his sheep then you know him well enough to know his voice. Isn't wonderful to truly know the only one who truly knows you? **A Regular Shepherd Sees The Sheep As Expendable... The Good Shepherd Sees Them As Essential**

The next thing we see is... **Jesus is the Good Shepherd Because He Leaves The Ninety-Nine (vs16).** He wants all to be a part of his flock... so he goes and chases those who aren't yet his. He (the God of the universe) pursues you when you don't pursue him. Kind of incredible. The most important, powerful, loving person in the universe is pursuing us. In fact, he loves you so much that he will run you down and go as far as he must to get your attention. He'll even leave those he already has to chase you down. Look at this illustration in **Matthew 18:12-14.** God isn't abandoning anyone... he leaves his sheep in a good place... but the illustration is clear... he cares very deeply for those who he loves... enough to chase them down. He will leave the 99 to find the 1. Are you the one he has left the 99 for? Think about that for a second. When's the last time you took first priority? When's the last time that others were put on the back burner so you could get the attention? It's nice to be wanted and pursued. It's nice to be given priority isn't it. **Jesus always gives you priority. Jesus is always chasing you. A Regular Shepherd Sees The Sheep As Expendable... The Good Shepherd Sees Them As Essential**

Lastly... **Jesus is the Good Shepherd Because He Lays Down His Life & Takes It Up Again (vs17-18).** The danger here is that this could start sounding like a you focused message. Jesus fights for you... he knows you... he chases you. But, let some reality set it in... its not

about you! Remember, You are valuable only because of the value of the Shepherd! So let's put the focus where it belongs... on Jesus, the good shepherd! Why is he so good? Not because he loves us, fights for us, knows us, and pursues us. He would be good even if he didn't do all of those things. He's good because he laid down his life. The God of the universe in the form of a man willingly laid down his life for the sin payment of all of mankind. No one took his life. He willingly laid it down. He's good because he has the power to lay down his life. He has the power of life and death! And he exercised that power for us. He's good because he has the power to take it back up again. He arose from the dead by his own power. He is the almighty, all powerful, sovereign God of the universe and he has proved it through rising from the dead. Ultimately he's good because even though we are a priority...we aren't the number one priority – God is! Look at **vs 18.** He laid down his life and took it up again primarily because it honored his father God! All the glory is to be given to God. So...**Even though Jesus loves us so much he was willing to die for us... he also loves us enough to deny us the glory that belongs to God**

Application (Resolution, You)

So... is Jesus the Good Shepherd? Is the greatest shepherd we could ever have? Has he loved you with an unconditional love? A love that fights for you, knows you, puts up with you, pursues you, and dies for you? Yes he does. Is there any greater love in the whole world? Of course there isn't. **A Regular Shepherd Sees The Sheep As Expendable... The Good Shepherd Sees Them As Essential** But is he really the Good Shepherd if it's all about us? We are a priority for Jesus but for the Sake of his glory we aren't the main priority – God is! It is for his glory that he died... it is for his glory that he rose.. it is for his glory that he lives

Conclusion

He's only the Good shepherd to you if you are one of his sheep. Have you accepted him as your good shepherd?

Prayer

Psalm 23